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ABSTRACT

Intended for those interested in the development of webpages and their use in instruction, this paper discusses the development of a career and job information webpage on InfoSurf, the University of California at Santa Barbara Library's website. The career webpage was created to serve as an instructional and career counseling tool, and corresponds with the structure of the workshops given on using the World Wide Web to find jobs. The webpage is also intended to be used outside the workshops, as a starting point for job-seekers. It integrates Web and non-Web resources within a framework of the career selection and job-hunting process. The paper describes the overall structure of the page, page design and organization of the page, instruction features on the page, the specific criteria for evaluation and selection of sites, page maintenance and revision, and promotion. The career page is classified as one of the "subject collections" on InfoSurf, which are developed and maintained by the library's subject specialists who identify, select, and provide a structure for Internet resources. The career webpage is primarily for use by the UCSB community. (SWC)

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Constructing Career Connections: Building a Webpage for the Job Seeker

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Abstract

We will discuss the development of our career and job information webpage on InfoSurf, the UCSB Library's website. The career webpage was created to be used as an instructional and career counseling tool, and corresponds with the structure of the workshops we give on using the Web to find jobs. The webpage is also intended to be used outside of the workshops as a starting point for job-seekers. It integrates Web and non-Web resources within a framework of the career selection and job-hunting process. This paper describes the organization of the page and focuses on the specific criteria for evaluation and selection of sites. The presentation is geared to those interested in the development of webpages and their use in instruction.

Abstract

We will discuss the development of our career and job information webpage on InfoSurf, the UCSB Library's website. The career webpage was created to be used as an instruction and career counseling tool, and corresponds with the structure of the workshops we give on using the Web to find jobs. The webpage is also intended to be used outside of the workshops as a starting point for job-seekers. It integrates Web and non-Web resources within a framework of the career selection and job-hunting process. This paper describes the organization of the page and focuses on the specific criteria for evaluation and selection of sites. The presentation is geared to those interested in the development of webpages and their use in instruction.

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Overall Structure

In 1995, along with a career advisor from UCSB's Counseling & Career Services (C&CS), we designed and began to offer a workshop on using Internet resources to find a job. When the library obtained Web access a year later, we decided to develop a career webpage to use in the workshop. Our career webpage (Doyle and Martorana, 1997) was mounted on InfoSurf (InfoSurf, 1997), UCSB Library's website. These two contexts affected its design:

1. As part of InfoSurf, it is classed as one of the "subject collections." These subject webpages are developed and maintained by the library's subject specialists who identify, select, and provide a structure for Internet resources. These pages are created primarily for use by the UCSB community (Duda, 1997). The InfoSurf context primarily affects its "look:" the title banner, the gifs and backgrounds we use, and the links to the homepage and index-pages of InfoSurf at the bottom of the page.
2. It is the main instruction tool used in the Net-ing a Job workshop which we give with the campus career advisor for UCSB students. Because of its role as a teaching tool, we included non-Web resources to remind users to consider and use relevant resources in any format in their hunt for career information.

Page Design

In consultation with the career advisor, we divided the career development process into four sections:

- Self Assessment
- Career Identification
- Job Identification
- Personal Presentation

We structured our webpage and workshop into corresponding sections, following this process. We then subdivided the Job Announcements section of our webpage into various categories:

- Classified Advertisements
- Jobs Listed by Region
- Job Banks
- Jobs Listed by Company
- Seasonal Jobs & Internships
- Academic and Education Jobs
- Government Jobs
- Jobs by Subject
- Lists of Mailing Lists
- Newsgroups
- Other Job Announcement Sources

This section of the page continues to evolve according to the interests we encounter and whether we can find collections of job announcements related to those interests.

The final section of our page, Mega Career Sites, connects to a few major career resource sites. These provide extensive links for further research on career and job information.

The appearance of our page is simple. It uses a basic outline structure, and does not have complex graphics (which can take a long time to load) or frames (which we find can be more confusing than helpful). We provide internal section indexing which allows users to jump to a section for quick access to material of interest. We place these indexing links at both the top of the page and at the end of each section. Because of the length of the section on job announcements, we provide similar internal indexing to move around among the job categories.

The three main principles of page design described above are:

- give it structure
- provide internal indexing
- simple is better

Instruction Features

Two features of our page were added specifically for instruction. The first is the section divisions, which were created to lead students through the career process. An outline of the page's organization and a brief description and purpose of each section are located just under the contents links at the top of the page. These descriptions are repeated under the appropriate section heading.

The second instruction feature is the integration of the non-web resources found in the library and at the C&CS. For each of these resources, we give a brief explanation of what it is and why to use that particular source. We link to the C&CS webpage and appropriate sections of their online handbook which describe their services. Links to library resources are made through the *Career and Internship Reference Guide* (Doyle, 1996), which lists some basic reference sources, has hot links to the library's catalog, PEGASUS, and gives sample searches. Another library resource link is to the Melvyl(r) system for access to article databases.

Criteria

Some of the criteria we use to select sites to include on our webpage are specific to the section of the page. However, the following criteria are generally applicable to the whole page. We look for sites that:

- contain content appropriate to our page
- contribute unique content
- are useful to our primary clientele (e.g., we didn't include sites on career changes)
- are accessible (i.e., free or available to our users through our subscriptions)
- are well-maintained
- have good internal structure and maneuverability within the structure
- are informational rather than promotional

Specific criteria for the career sections (Self-Assessment, Career Identification, Personal Presentation)

The primary focus of the self-assessment section is to refer the user to the C&CS. We do connect to two self-assessment sites to illustrate the type of assessment tools used by career advisors. In the sections on career identification and personal presentation, we do not attempt to connect to all possible sites, rather we chose some sites with solid content that fairly well cover the sections' scope.

Specific criteria for the Job Announcements and Mega Career Sites sections

While we are highly selective with the links we make in the career sections, we try to be more thorough in the job announcements section. We look for sites in each category that are fairly comprehensive, thus leaving to those comprehensive sites the burden of updating the numerous direct links to job lists. In some of the job announcement categories, however, we use a combination of links to comprehensive sites along with direct links to sites of local interest [e.g., employment advertisements from the Santa Barbara News-Press (Coastline, n.d.)].

In some cases we choose sites that don't meet all our criteria because of superior or unique content. For example, we included a site in our Jobs by Region category that does not meet our criteria for maneuverability, and added instructions on how to get to the appropriate section.

Maintenance

We have a performance-oriented revision schedule. We offer the workshop three to four times each quarter. Before each group of workshops, we check to make sure links are live. We become aware of interests of our users during our workshop and reference encounters. We add links and change the organization of the page depending on what appears--and what disappears--from the web.

Selecting sites is an ongoing process. For example, we continue to search for sites in the category Jobs By Subject because, although we have made links to several sites, we are not yet satisfied with what we have found. Also, we have made links to sites that later get weeded after in-depth comparisons with other sites that better meet our criteria. We continue to fine-tune our page, for example, by adding descriptions to links where it enhances instructional value.

Promotion

Maintenance and revision of webpages will take as much time as you allow. It would be difficult to put time and energy into it if we didn't feel it was used. We justify the work to ourselves because it is the backbone of the workshop we give several times each quarter, and it is used to teach writing classes focused on career topics. We promote the page by referring to it on our career reference guide, and by recommending it in classes as a good place to start a web search for career and job information.

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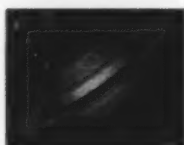
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